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ABSTRACT

Intended for use as an inservice tool for elementary school teachers and as an independent study tool, this guide provides a framework for designing language experiences in the classroom. Following an introduction, the first section of the guide deals with language as communication, as thought, and as a series of interrelated skills. Three questions language arts teachers must ask themselves are posed: whether they give receptive and expressive skills equal time, whether inner thought can occur without language, and whether teachers interrelate the language arts. The second section explores creating an environment for language, and is organized around the essential areas of language teaching. The section includes three language arts teaching frameworks, ways of providing for interaction between the different language arts, and two suggested models for enriching the context for language learning. The third section deals with designing language experiences in the areas of listening, oral expression, dramatization, written expression, literature as a base for critical reading, and a framework for teaching reading using children's literature. In addition to the resource lists in each skill area, a selected list of writings in language arts is included in a bibliography. (HTH)

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STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

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OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Superintendent of Public Instruction

Irene G. Bandy — **G. Robert Bowers**
Assistant Superintendents of Public Instruction

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Division of
Educational Services

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Margaret Blosser
Elementary Supervisor
Carrollton Exempted Village

Carol Bridinger
Teacher, Grade 6
Allen East Middle School
Allen County Schools

Doris Dangler Crump
Administrator
Lorain City Schools

Carol Eberts
Teacher, Grade 1
Hamden Elementary
Vinton County Local Schools

Olivia Gaytko
Language Arts Grades 5-6
Willis School
Carrollton Exempted Village

Hazel L. Gibbony
Associate Professor Emeritus
The Ohio State University

Gayle Haywood
Teacher, Grade 2
Dayton City Schools

Dorothy Keith Jackson
Principal, Superior F.O.C.A.S.
East Cleveland City Schools

George K. Lawson
Elementary Supervisor
Scioto County Schools

JoAnn McCraley
Language Arts Grade 8
All Saints Consolidated School
Diocese of Steubenville

Monalea Mirage
Reading Teacher
Superior F.O.C.A.S.
East Cleveland City Schools

Carl E. Moyler
Secondary Supervisor
Dayton City Schools

Patricia Muncy
Reading Supervisor
Wayne County Schools

Dorothy L. Page
Elementary Coordinator
Allen County Schools

Sister Anne Rutledge
Coordinator
Diocese of Steubenville

Carolyn Saliba
Secondary Reading Coordinator
Franklin Local
Muskingum County Schools

Mary Ann Simmons
Director Elementary Education
Vinton County Local Schools

Cathy Skiver
Teacher, Grade 1
Wheelersburg Local
Scioto County Schools

Donald Snider
Principal
Huber Ridge Elementary
Westerville City Schools

Mary Ann Titus
Teacher, Grade 3
Huber Ridge Elementary
Westerville City Schools

Myrtle White
Teacher, Grade 6
Meister Road Elementary
Lorain City Schools

James R. Whiteman
Supervisor
Fulton County Schools

JoAnne Winfield
Teacher, Grade 4
Archbold Area Local
Fulton County Schools

Ann B. Wood
Curriculum Supervisor
Muskingum County Schools

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FOREWORD

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Helping students to communicate effectively has always been a top educational objective. Since the early years of public education when the "3 R's" were the **only** curriculum, two of those three were skills of communication. Reading and writing continue to be regarded as high priority items for successful orientation into adult life.

The tools of language include more than just reading and writing. They enable students to become more attentive listeners, to speak with greater clarity, to write creatively and effectively and to read critically. The close interrelationships of these major skill areas of the language arts are the focus of this inservice publication.

Elementary Language Arts: Strategies for Teaching and Learning provides a framework for designing language experiences in the classroom. Concepts, goals, interrelationships with other language skills, essential experiences, examples of classroom activities, evaluation techniques and useful resources are offered in each skill area. In addition, there is a review of the present trends in language arts research and a section on creating an environment for language.

The emphasis on student and teacher interaction, and upon enriching the contexts for language learning should provide additional strategies for teaching and an improved understanding of the learning process.

Franklin B. Walter

Franklin B. Walter
Superintendent of Public Instruction

ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS: STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Using This Publication

Elementary Language Arts: Strategies for Teaching and Learning

Section I: Understanding Our Language

Section II: Creating an Environment for Language

Section III: Designing Language Experiences

Bibliography

This key will be found throughout this book as a cue that a particular segment might serve as a useful inservice topic. When all the "key" areas are put together they become the framework for the inservice use of this publication. Some may be adapted as overhead transparencies, while others might serve as topics for discussions or as handouts. All pages of this publication may be duplicated for inservice use.

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ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS: STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

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ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS: STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Introduction

All educators are concerned that children learn to communicate their thoughts and feelings effectively. From kindergarten to the upper elementary school levels the oral and written language skills are stressed and rightly so. Facility with one's language is essential to achievement in all content areas. Children have already acquired considerable ability to use their language before they begin first grade although they are not yet aware of the rules of the language. The teacher's role at the primary level then becomes one of helping children utilize their natural language abilities in relating to the language of the school. The teacher needs to be sensitive to the child's attempts to learn the English language system and to recognize when progress is being made.

Most children have acquired much of their ability to communicate prior to their school years and have done so without benefit of direct teaching. They have learned naturally through listening, imitating and practicing the words required to communicate their desires and needs. **Research studies have found that this natural approach to learning and improving language skills is most effective. In view of these findings, teachers might begin to examine their own attitudes toward language arts teaching, their relationships with students, and the interaction and involvement in the classroom that require and produce language skill.**

This publication will be concerned with such interaction and involvement, as well as the strong interrelationships among the components of language teaching.

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Language Is Communication
Do We Give Receptive and Expressive Skills Equal Time?

The primary purpose of language is communication. The teacher's concern is that students learn to express themselves effectively and to comprehend the information they receive. Speaking and writing are the major forms of expression. Dramatics, nonverbal communication, handwriting, spelling, grammar and usage are necessary components. The receptive skills include listening and reading, with literature contributing a treasure of both information and enjoyment. Observation might also be included, since visual discrimination skills play a vital part in reading. An understanding of gesture, posture and facial expression clearly plays an important function in receiving information and interpreting feelings.

The teacher who has a command of our language system and its interrelationships can convey to students the idea that the expressive and receptive skills are mutually reinforcing. Improvement in listening aids speaking. Reading, writing, listening and speaking are all positively related. The studies of Walter Loban, one of the significant researchers of children's language, verifies these interrelationships among the language arts.

Language Arts Skills As discussed in this publication	
Receptive	**Expressive**
Listening Observing Reading Children's Literature	Speaking Dramatizing Writing Handwriting Spelling Grammar Usage Punctuation Capitalization

Communication takes place in many contexts, and teachers who provide common experiences for their students may find these a profitable way to begin the process. When students experience an event together, such as a field trip, working on a project, or hearing a story, they will see objects and hear terms presented in a meaningful context that can serve as a base for future language experiences. At a later time the students can use their experiences and the language acquired to discuss or record the past event in a meaningful way. **Classroom projects in which the receptive and expressive skills are related within the context of a natural give and take of ideas will help children extend their understanding of the language skills.**

Louise Ashes, *The Language of Experience* (Urbana, Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1967), p. 46.

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Language Is Thought: Can We Think Without Language?

Language Is Interrelated: Do We Provide for Interrelationships?

Not only are the language skills closely related in function, they are mutually beneficial or reinforcing. Reading, for example, offers a model of correct spelling and sentence formation as well as word meaning, in a context that will, in turn, help children become more skillful in writing and speaking. Children who listen to good speech models will be more apt to improve their own speech. Children who are made aware of changes in stress or pitch, for example, will have a greater understanding of the effect of such changes on the meanings of words. Children will tend to use vocabulary correctly in speaking or in writing when that vocabulary has been encountered in the reading of books, in listening to stories read aloud, or in conversation. Attempts have been made to teach each of these skills separately, but it is difficult to separate the language skills, since they

Children have acquired a significant amount of skill in producing and using language prior to their school years. Their skills are reflected in their ability to express themselves with well-constructed sentences and with an adequate vocabulary, and to listen with moderate comprehension to most utterances they hear. Many children have learned something about the formation of letters and can even write their own names. Children's television programs in recent years have certainly furthered children's understanding of letters and numbers and captions in picture books. The emphasis on reading shown on Sesame Street, television programs in the home, and in public libraries has created a renewed interest in books and a desire to read. This calls for developing a readiness for reading in the early years of formal schooling and introduction of reading in the first grade. An atmosphere of experience and interest is created in many children for all aspects of language. Children who come to school having had many reading and writing experiences will learn to use their language skillfully.

Developing the Framework

In creating a supportive language environment in a school setting then, it would seem appropriate for the classroom teacher to establish a program in which language can be used throughout the day in a wide variety of experiences and activities. ***The more closely these activities resemble real-life experiences the more readily they will be accepted by children as relevant and useful and therefore worthy of their time and effort.*** Such a teaching/learning environment is appropriate for all ages and not just for children entering the elementary school program. ***We must capitalize on the tremendous amount of language facility children bring to the school environment and establish in our classroom an atmosphere that will encourage continued progress in language learning.***

A Summary of Frameworks for Teaching Language Arts

ROACH VAN ALLEN - A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

- interaction is the key
- sensitivity to environment
- self-confidence in language usage
- child's own language is basis for instruction

CHARLES CALLITRI - A STRUCTURE FOR TEACHING LANGUAGE ARTS

- autistic stage - language used for self only
- communicative stage - need to share
- analytic stage - attention to errors
- esthetic stage - accomplishments motivate further experience

JAMES MOFFETT - A THEORY OF DISCOURSE

physical distance between speaker and audience

- I-I - inner speech
- I-You - conversation
- I-You - dialogue at a distance
- I-It - publication for unknown audience

levels of abstraction of subject matter

- what is happening - perception of event
- what happened - memory of past event
- what happens - classification, generalization
- what may happen - hypothesizing, conceptualizing

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The chart on the preceding page summarizes the three frameworks that follow. This additional information is given for those who wish to explore the concepts in greater detail.

A language experience approach. The following [illegible] framework suggested by Roach Van Allen seems an appropriate way to begin considering the broad base for effective language instruction.

A structure for teaching. In developing a structure for his [illegible] program, Charles Cooper offers a pattern that illustrates the need for teachers who are sensitive to the students' motives when involved in language learning. His structure consists of four [illegible] activities: communicating, clarifying, and evaluating. A brief description of these activities and the stage for the suggested program that follows will help to give an understanding of the child's behavior when using language.

The initiating stage is similar to what Piaget calls egocentricity and is not related to the way one uses language to communicate with others. Children use language only for their own purposes. They have a personal experience to recall for their own pleasure. In view of something of interest, or in the case that [illegible] role playing and dress. These experiences do not have to be shared or "graded" by anyone else. This stage can offer an opportunity for the teacher to observe students as they [illegible] work. It will be helpful in considering their perceptual abilities and in assessing what they are doing with language.

In the communication stage, the students need to share with someone else those feelings and things they enjoyed previously by themselves. It is at this point that the teacher aids the communication process, but only when spelling or punctuation, for example, interferes with a written message that the students want to share. This preserves the focus on the writing, which is the reason for communicating.

It is at the [illegible] stage that teenagers, real or written, are subject to correction and evaluation. Students who have derived pleasure from the author's experience and presented ideas at the communicative stage can now readily be led to see the necessity for structure in their language. As students communicate ever with wider audiences they can be helped to see the necessity for using the conventions of language, spelling, punctuation, grammar that are understood by most people. At this stage the teacher introduces the study of form and style and teaches them definite tools. Errors that can restrict communication or inhibit communication such as incorrect spelling or illegible handwriting are analyzed and corrected. Students then feel better about themselves as their work improves.

The evaluative stage is a synthesis of the first three and it leaves the student with a feeling of accomplishment which in turn provides the motivation for additional work with language experiences. The stages are [illegible] and overlap to varying degrees, as the variety of language experiences cannot be separated so precisely.

The understanding developed between students and teacher is extremely important in this approach. The teacher who asks children to give an opinion cannot then mark an opinion wrong. Illogical and unjustified opinions may be questioned, of course. The teacher also asks students to [illegible] and form, have them [illegible] their product if it fails to meet the assignment standard. Then the teacher can analyze the errors and help students in their efforts to improve their writing.

A theory of discourse. Another structure that has been widely accepted is that of James Moffett's student-centered language arts curriculum. Moffett has developed a theory of discourse that follows the basic theories of child development. It closely parallels Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Cazden's four stages for language. Moffett believes that the teaching and learning process must be brought together in order to [illegible] education, involving the interaction of the subject with the structure of the student.

Moffett's theory of discourse is determined by (1) the physical distance between the speaker and his audience that he calls maturity of distance and (2) the level of abstraction of the subject matter. He describes the physical communication between speaker and audience as the determiner of the type of discourse. The first is I-It or the direct speech level of one [illegible] to another [illegible] about out-thoughts or [illegible] which we [illegible] as a [illegible]

Allen, R. Van. *Language Experiences in Communication*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976. pp. 16-20.

Cazden, Charles. "A Structure for Teaching the Language Arts." *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 31, 1961.

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time. The second is "I You" which is an outer vocalization or conversation. It is usually informal and friendly and consists of the speaker telling someone else what happened. A third type of distance is also "I You" but the speaker and listener or listeners are removed in time and space, so letter writing is necessary. Correspondence is dialogue at a distance. The audience is known to the writer or speaker and some response is expected. The fourth stage of rhetorical distance is "I It" in which the speaker and audience are unknown to each other. **Formal writing requires that vocabulary, style and logic must be used so that anybody in the audience can understand.** We might think of this as publication.

When describing the levels of abstraction of the subject matter Moffett uses four verb tenses which indicate when events occur. **What is happening** is how we perceive things as they happen and might occur in conversation, writing a letter or dramatization. **What happened** is when the speaker must rely on memory and is sharing an incident that occurred previously, as in reporting or in story telling. Classification and generalization occur when the speaker is relating **what happens** and might occur as a student is explaining an historical event. When the speaker or writer is relating **what may happen**, hypothesizing, theorizing and conceptualizing take place such as in argument or persuasion or when describing a science experiment.

The levels of abstraction are found at every stage of rhetorical distance and students should be encouraged to work with all levels to understand the differences that will occur in word choice, punctuation, sentence structure, grammar, paragraphing and organization. Children know intuitively that they speak differently to different people or audiences. Moffett's theory merely organizes this natural understanding into a developmental sequence for teaching and learning.

Providing for Interaction

In his conceptual framework Roach Van Allen has stated that interaction is the only process through which language matures, and that it is promoted through the use of numerous activities, experiences, and devices. If students bring to the schoolroom environment language skills that they have acquired before attending school, then daily experiences in refining and extending those skills through interaction with their teachers and their peers is justified. Douglas Barnes has said, "A school, by its very nature is a place where communication goes on; that is what it is for."[1] He also states that language must enter into the curriculum in two ways: (1) as the communication system of the classroom in which the learner is more or less passive and (2) as a means of learning in which the learner is an active participant in the making of meaning.

[1]Barnes, Douglas, *From Communication to Curriculum*. New York: Penguin Books, 1976. p. 24.

[2]Ibid. p. 31.

Both teachers and children are constantly interpreting each others' actions, talk, and nonverbal signals. How the teacher establishes relationships in the classroom and provides opportunities for interaction will often be a greater incentive to the student's participation in school work than will intelligence or self-confidence.

There is another type of interaction needed in the language learning process and that is interaction with the content of the curriculum itself. Many experiences are needed before students are able to link their everyday knowledge gained outside the school with the knowledge presented in the classroom.

In order to function in the classroom children must feel secure. To feel secure, children need some sense of control of their learning strategies and their ability to predict. If teachers permit children to interact with new content, materials, and terminology individually and in small groups, they will begin to take more responsibility for solving their own problems. **The freedom to discuss, to pose possible solutions and to try out their hypotheses, offers many opportunities for language to be recognized as a useful tool for learning.** Children need to be encouraged to relate new experiences to old ones; for it takes time to process information. Through conversations, discussions and writing, children can bring their perceptions to the learning task and merge them with those of the teacher. If all the talking and telling is done by the teacher and all information is gained only from textbooks, then we are ignoring the tenets of Piaget, Vygotsky and others that the function of speech and writing is as an instrument for reshaping the learning task into a meaningful experience."

Interpersonal interactions are extremely important. "The social interactions," says Louise Cherry, "in which the child participates directly in the alternating roles of speaker and listener are among the most important experiences for the child developing communication competence." Cherry says that such experiences create a need for the child to use language systematically and effectively to communicate, to provide opportunities to test language rules and to receive information about the adequacy of those rules.[1]

Verbal & Nonverbal Signals

One of the tasks of students is to learn to interpret their teachers' remarks.

Teachers reveal much of their attitude toward their teaching and their students by their verbal and nonverbal signals. Much research has been carried out on

[1]Cherry, Louise. "A Systematic Approach to Language Development in the Preschool" in *Language Development and Disorders*. eds. Eisenson and Kent. New York: Pergamon Press, 1980. p. 113.

[2]Ibid.

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Signal 4. Nonverbal communication. Perhaps the most significant problem in the broad area of nonverbal communication is the general lack of awareness on the part of some teachers. The scope of nonverbal communication is surprising. It can involve items over which the teacher has no control such as the size, color or design of the classroom or the building itself, the classroom furnishings and the number of students in the classroom. The teacher who is aware of these effects of the environment can arrange the classroom so that the space and facilities are used to better advantage. **Individual space and space to socialize or work together need to be considered in establishing an inviting classroom.** Movements around the classroom, the gestures employed, posture, and above all, facial expression and eye contact have an effect upon the degree of acceptance, rejection, action, and interaction in the classroom. Teachers who are aware will be more apt to adjust these factors to achieve the ultimate learning situation.

The effects of nonverbal communication upon the learning incentives of students are made even more complex when the students in the classroom are from different cultural backgrounds. Caucasian, Black and Native American children interpret eye contact in different ways, for example, and gestures and facial expression are more critical with certain cultural groups than others. Howard Smith has compiled a comprehensive reference which examines numerous categories of nonverbal communication that have implications for teaching.[1] His seven categories include: environment, proxemics (use of space), kinesics (body motion, movement, posture, facial and eye behavior), touching behavior, physical characteristics, paralanguage (voice volume, pitch, tempo and intensity and silent pauses), and artifacts (clothes and beauty aids).

[1] Smith, Howard A. "Nonverbal Communication." *The Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 73, No. 4, 1980, p. 207-211.

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Components of Nonverbal Communication

Environment:

- placement of furniture - desks and chairs

Personal space:

- distance between teacher and students
- distance between students

Body movement and orientation:

- gestures - pointing, shrugging
- posture

Facial expression:

- moods and emotions
- eye behavior

Nonlanguage vocal behavior:

- paralanguage (how a statement is made)
  laughing, crying, intensity, pitch, articulation

Adapted from Wiemann and Wiemann Nonverbal Communication in the Elementary Classroom

Importance of Questioning

One means of inviting students into a learning experience is through the use of appropriate questions. **A careful sequence of questions can lead to discussion, and open-ended questions tend to be the best talk starters.**

Research shows that teachers ask countless questions and far too many that are either unnecessary or irrelevant. One researcher, J.T. Dillon, suggests that teachers should state what they are thinking rather than pose it as a question to students. Allowing students to respond to a statement rather than to a question serves to involve the student and clarify what was said. Students can be invited to question each other and this, too, encourages active involvement and is likely to stimulate greater participation in discussion. Because students are quick to recognize the unnecessary question, Dillon recommends that teachers ask questions only when clarification or additional information is truly needed. **One alternative to unnecessary questions might be silence until the student has time to rephrase, rethink or formulate a statement.**

Wlodkowski recommends limiting the use of knowledge questions and selectively increasing the use of

Wiemann, Mary O. and Wiemann, John M. Nonverbal Communication in the Elementary Classroom. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1975.

Dillon, J.T. "Alternatives to Questions." The Language Arts, Vol. 60, No. 4, pp. 42-48, 1983.

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comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation questions. **He suggests teachers ask themselves, "In the learner's perceptions, how stimulating and provocative are the questions being discussed?"**

If the teachers' goals include bringing students into an active participating role so that language interactions can take place, then the model they present should be one of provoking thought. Effective questioning practices are one means of providing students with opportunities to acquire and classify information and to use logical thought. Questions can subvert, as well as enhance, these teaching goals. Sondra Napell has posed some questions, paraphrased here, that all teachers can ask themselves about their use of questions.

Do your questions enhance learning or put students on the spot?

Do you give all students equal time to formulate their responses?

Do you ask questions that encourage responses?

Do you plan experiences which require that students design their own questions? For example: interviewing, brainstorming, one-to-one conversing.

Do you plan time for summing up?

Since questioning is recognized as an important key to stimulating discussion, to provoking logical thought and to opening the door to self-expression, teachers need to help students perfect their own questioning techniques. Students can be encouraged to formulate their own questions with more precision, clarity and relevance as a means of increasing their effectiveness in both oral and written communication. This means time must be set aside for practicing questioning techniques and listening to and assessing the responses received. **Open-ended questions by the teacher do much to allay students' fears of having their responses ridiculed and allow for greater flexibility, individuality and creativity.**

The segment on questioning in Motivation: Unleashing Learning Power offers specific suggestions for improving classroom questions. A few are reprinted here.

[1] Wlodkowski, Raymond J. *Motivation and Teaching: A Practical Guide*. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1978, p. 28.

[2] Napell, Sondra M. "Using Questions to Enhance Classroom Learning." *Education*, Vol. 96, pp. 194-197.

One Department of Education, Manitoba, *Motivation: Unleashing Learning Power*, pp. 24-26.

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Improving Questioning Skills

1. The teacher's questioning skill is revealed in the subtle phrasing and direction of the question itself. Phrase questions to open up student response rather than to imply that there is a known answer. (For some questions, there **is** only one correct answer.)

2. Ask questions which have more than one correct answer. Encourage children to view a problem from several perspectives and arrive at a number of different but equally plausible answers. Such questions also can lessen a child's fear of being wrong and can help him concentrate on the activity itself.

3. Ask questions which require multiple-word answers. The answers a child gives are, in part, a function of how a child thinks about the question and, in part, a function of the questions we ask.

4. Encourage children to ask questions. Urge children to ask about things they do not understand by reacting positively when they **do** ask questions. Part of the positive reaction includes careful listening to a child when questions are asked.

5. Help learners make judgments on the basis of evidence rather than by guessing. Ask children to back up their answer with evidence. Show children you think evidence is important. Give children practice in using evidence or criteria to develop their answers.

6. Let students know when their answer or work is wrong, but do so in a positive or neutral way. Direct corrections to the child's answer or work, not to the child as a person.

7. Help children view learning as problem solving.

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Context 1: Content of the curriculum. The language arts have been presented as a means of communication and with components that are closely interrelated. Most educators agree that the language arts are considered tools of learning more than as subjects in themselves. It would seem that the skills of language, therefore, should be taught and used within the more meaningful context of the subject matter or content areas.

This does not mean that all language skills are acquired in an incidental way within the context of studying other subjects. **Once the language component has been introduced in a relevant situation, there will need to be direct instruction in the specific skills required for communication.** For example, new technical vocabulary may require dictionary skills and the word recognition skills of reading. When writing a report, the student must be able to locate material and organize it systematically, and must possess sufficient mechanical skills to produce the final product. The various content areas of the elementary curriculum then would serve as the contexts within which language can be taught.

There are many other environments in which language can be used meaningfully. These are both in school and outside, with familiar materials and with unfamiliar, and are used both by individuals and by small groups.

Context 2: Familiar to unfamiliar. The principle of learning suggests that experiences should move from familiar to unfamiliar and from concrete to abstract. Teachers who provide for learning experiences in a developmental way will help all students bridge the gap between their present knowledge of the world and the "school" knowledge they are expected to acquire.

Many opportunities for using language occur when children are exploring their immediate environment. Some of these explorations will arise spontaneously, as students discover that things they already know can contribute to their school experiences. Trips around their school and community will permit students to draw upon their knowledge of that area and discussions, reports, interviews, and observations will provide the confidence needed to pursue an environment farther afield. Trips to historical areas or museums contain a wealth of experiences that acquaint children with less familiar territory and provide for more challenging language experiences in the form of new vocabulary, descriptions, comparisons with the familiar, new questions to ask, and new materials to discuss. As the Mallett report indicates "... they gain confidence in their capacity to make sense of what they encounter."[1]

At times the context is so familiar that it is often overlooked. Students can be led to discover features of familiar objects that they had never before noted or considered. A closer look at the school building and the homes in the vicinity, for example, could reveal architectural differences that help to identify the age of the buildings. Styles of architecture, construction materials used, cornerstones, and historical records are a few of the topics that might be initiated by a closer look. Information about streets and roadways, nearby streams, cemeteries, and local businesses can all be sources for school studies. The changing neighborhood might provide a springboard for research, interviews, discussions and discovery of local folklore.

Students of any age need many experiences near at hand before embarking on long trips to unfamiliar territory. Before studying the culture of other countries and times, they should look at the daily lives of their own neighbors, their work, their hobbies and their families. At a later time it will be easier for them to study via textbook or museums the world of the pioneers and their daily lives, crafts and customs. Children who bring meaningful experiences to their unfamiliar textbook and reference materials will be able to integrate much more effectively their "action" knowledge and their "school" knowledge.

Context 3: Natural surroundings. Another context for learning might include the natural surroundings of the area such as the flowers, trees, waterways and wildlife native to the region. These might be natural outgrowths of science lessons and serve as a bountiful source for language arts experiences with many possible avenues of exploration.

Context 4: Vicarious experiences. Thus far the contexts have come from the immediate environment, but there are others that arise from books and other media. Filmstrips, movies, audio and video tapes and books are rich resources for classroom projects and language experiences in particular. These are the means of introducing students to new areas of the curriculum. Listening experiences, expressive writing, or extensions and enrichment of language activities.

Context 5: Spontaneous events. Now and then an event occurs that affects the lives and dominates the interests of students. Such an event demands immediate attention, and the skillful teacher can use this "teachable moment" to bridge the gap from the student to the curriculum. This more or less spontaneous context offers a valuable opportunity for expression of feelings and thoughts. Questions that arise can be channeled in many different directions.

[1]Mallett, Margaret and Newsome, Bernard. *Talking, Writing and Learning 8-13*. London: Evans Methuen Educational, 1977, p. 22.

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These represent only a few of the numerous contexts in which language activities thrive. The teachers who use the classroom as a primary environment can encourage children to include the world of the school, neighborhood and community as additional sources of knowledge and experiences. These teachers will benefit from the broadened perceptions their students bring to school assignments.

Two Suggested Models

To enable classroom teachers to visualize the use of language in a variety of contexts, two models are included at this point. **The content of the models is merely a sampling of what might be found in a typical elementary school situation. Teachers would substitute their own students' contributions.** How comprehensive the list of topics and activities becomes depends entirely upon the abilities of the students involved and the willingness of the teacher to expand their horizons.

The models represent two very different sources. One is a spontaneous occurrence that causes great concern among the members of the class. Students initiate discussion and suggest questions that might be investigated. The second is an assignment that the teacher develops for a specific subject area and arranges the environment to stimulate students.

The sequence in each model is somewhat the same, for the teacher may use each experience not only to further student knowledge of a specific content of materials, but also to tap all of the language functions feasible within that context. The examples show how classroom activities can serve as the content within which language can be used in functional ways.

A Sequence for Integrating Language Experiences

1. An event or planned introduction occurs
2. Opportunities for questions and comments are provided
3. Possible activities or topics are brainstormed
4. Decisions are made jointly by teacher and students as to which areas can reasonably be used
5. Groups are assigned as needed to explore a specific area
6. Discussions of group procedures are held and agreed upon
   - Time for group meetings
   - Sources of information
   - Record keeping
   - Progress reports
7. Ideas are exchanged during project
8. Experiences are assessed

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The two models that follow are offered as examples of how the teacher might record the responses of children on a chart or chalkboard as a result of a brainstorming session. All responses are recorded, and as they are offered the teacher asks under what category a specific suggestion should be written or whether a new category should be added. This "webbing" procedure continues until the children no longer have ideas. The teacher at this point might suggest a missing category, or ask questions that could stimulate more critical thought.

Once the webbing has been completed, the teacher and children make decisions as to which categories should be explored further. Committees are organized, and procedures for group meetings are discussed and an project. The teacher might want to alert the librarian about the project so that children will have help in locating their resource materials.

When children are working in groups and each group is researching a different area, there is a more natural interest in reporting and listening to the reports of others. Exchanges of information may occur during the search as each group seeks its own materials but finds resources appropriate to another. Discussing needs, listening for pertinent facts, writing notes, and locating and using materials provide language experiences that are educationally sound and meaningful to children. At the conclusion of the projects an assessment is made with the children of the success of the group process, the quality of the information gathered and the effectiveness of the groups' reports or presentations.

Two Models for Integrating Language Experiences Use of Transparencies

The pages that follow are designed for inservice use. Transparencies of each set of three pages can be made and projected as follows:

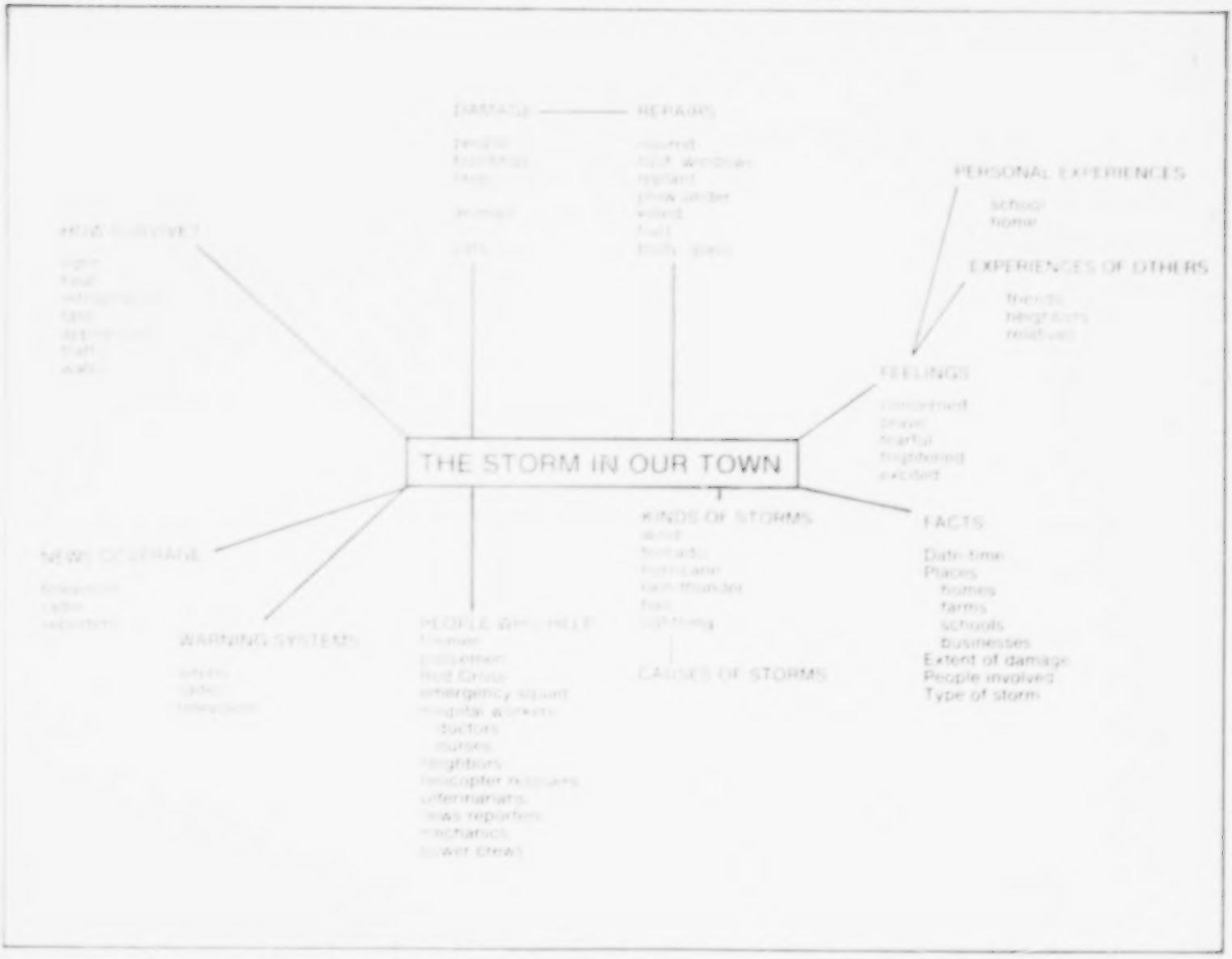
A SPONTANEOUS OCCURRENCE

1. Collecting Student Ideas
   show on overhead projector and discuss the brainstorming procedure.
2. Planning Language Experiences
   place on top of (1) to illustrate the language experiences that can be applied. Teachers would, of course, focus on those experiences that are most needed in their own classrooms.
3. Evaluating the Responses
   place (2) over this page to illustrate the questions teachers might ask themselves as they evaluate the responses of children to the assignment.

A PLANNED SCIENCE PROJECT

1. Collecting Student Ideas
2. Planning Language Experiences
3. Evaluating The Responses

present in the same sequence as the example above.



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A SPONTANEOUS OCCURRENCE - 2

Planning Language Experiences

THINKING

Problem solving

Decision making

Critical Thinking

TALKING

Interviewing

Sharing

DRAMATIZING

Role playing

WRITING

Expressing

Recording

LISTENING

READING

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A SPONTANEOUS OCCURRENCE - 3

Evaluating the Responses

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Collecting Student Ideas

BUILDING A TERRARIUM

- safety tips

BASIC MATERIALS NEEDED

CHANGES

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Evaluating the Project

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III. DESIGNING LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES

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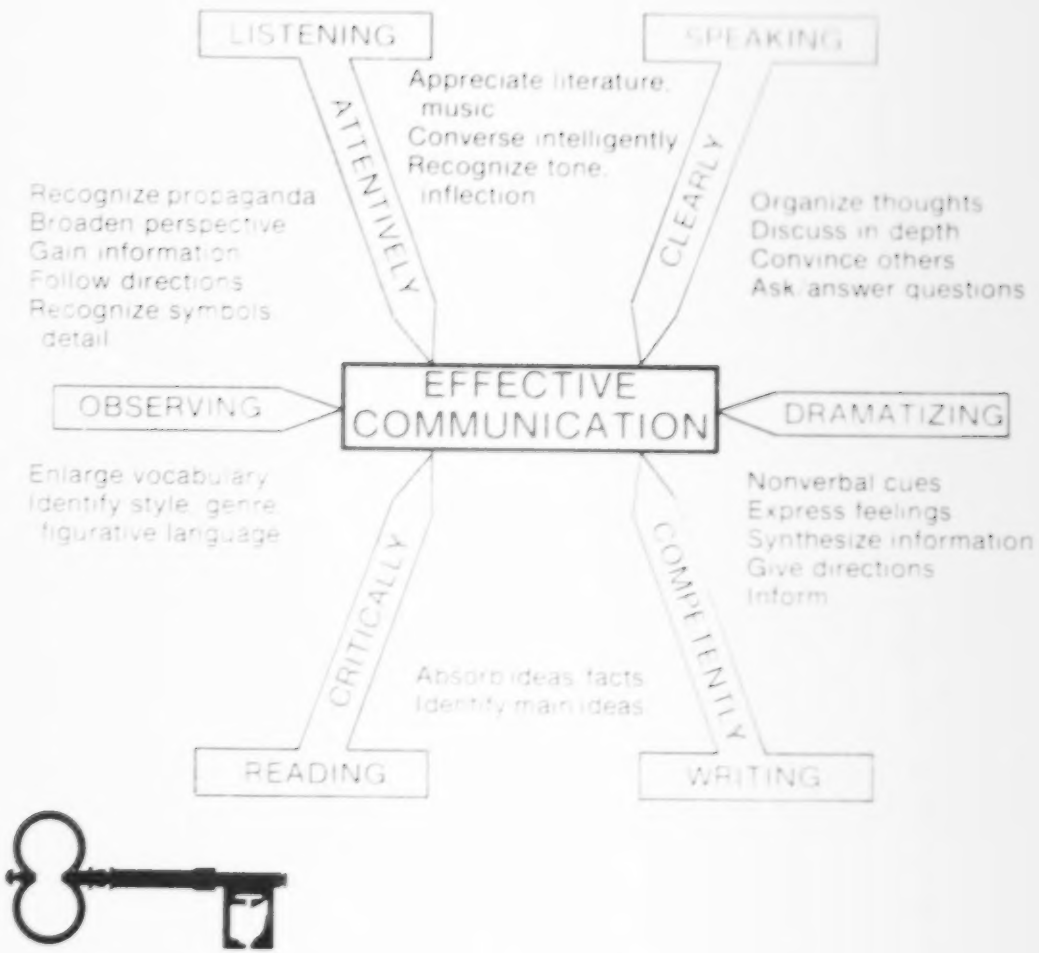
The language skills have been described thus far as being closely interrelated, mutually reinforcing and essential to effective communication. In the sections that follow, the receptive and expressive skills will be presented as integral parts of the communication process. The unique aspects of each will be described and strategies for their use explored. A few examples of the interrelationships each has with other language arts elements will be offered in the hope that teachers will view language and its teaching as a natural part of the total curriculum. Many of the examples offered will relate to other language skills and curriculum content. There is a time for direct teaching of specific skills in any content area but language skills generally are best understood by children when they are seen as a relevant part of the total learning process.

The Interrelationships of the Language Arts



Listening

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One of children's earliest means of receiving information is listening. From infancy, to the time they enter school, the sound of the human voice has guided their actions. For example, from the call to breakfast, the viewing of television, the chatter of family and playmates, and a scolding when naughty, to the firm "time to go to bed," children learn about the subtle meaning differences revealed by the tone in which a word is spoken. Even though they come to school with this background of language experience, children are not prepared for the kinds of listening the school program demands. Many cannot focus or maintain their attention. Strange new words are used and familiar words are suddenly used in a different context.

Listening, therefore, must be consciously taught within the many contexts of the school setting. A variety of listening experiences can be offered that include teacher, peers, other school personnel, outside speakers, and many different media such as radio, television, cassette and tape recordings, and records.

Listening with comprehension requires thought and the ability to maintain attention. It is the type of listening required in school settings. There are other types of listening that are essential for children and adults in order to become effective communicators. Classroom teachers should offer experiences in a variety of listening situations so that children can function comfortably. The more realistic and relevant to children these situations are, the more effective their listening skills will become.

Listening seems to improve in relation to certain developmental levels. Yet throughout their lives children and adults must be able to perform at any of these levels at any given time.

Marginal listening is essential to tune out distracting noises and at the same time be conscious of subtle changes in the sounds of people and things in the environment. Selective listening might be useful when only the highlights of a speech or a broadcast are desired, but it could also jeopardize good listening habits because some listeners might "tune out" all but what they want to hear. The critical listener might mentally respond to one speaker and come to a real meeting of the minds, but not be swayed by another's presentation. **In this age of media bombardment, we need to concern ourselves with the development of critical listening in children so that they may make judgments based on a complete understanding of a presentation and its implications.**

Early Experiences in Listening

Listening plays such a vital role in the total language arts program that a few activities are suggested here for beginning experiences in listening. Auditory discrimination skills are essential to developing the sound-symbol relationships necessary for successful reading and spelling. Listening can be fun and educational at the same time. Keep early experiences as simple and brief as possible; develop one skill area at a time and create a readiness for each activity.

- Daily story telling, story reading, story sharing times to develop attention to story sequence, descriptive vocabulary, in context and theme.
- Music, poetry, singing games to develop awareness of rhythm of the sounds of language.
- Auditory experiences to develop awareness of discrimination of sounds.
  - identify unseen sources of sounds (from behind a screen or on tape (egg beater, clock, clapping, water running).
  - develop awareness of pitch by playing notes on piano or other instrument, speaking in high and low voice.
  - play tapes of sounds of nature and man made sounds to be identified.
  - tap or march to a variety of rhythms.
  - develop a "code" of long and short sounds.
- Experiences with poetry, prose or real sounds to increase ability to develop mental images (listen and draw a picture of something in story).
- Stories, word puzzles, and number games are useful for practicing listening for detail (clues) to solve a problem or mystery.
- Daily conversation time, show and tell, and sharing experiences or books with small groups develop ability to think with speaker and respond with relevant questions or comments.
- Directions for building an object or folding paper help to increase skill in listening for specific information.

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Kinds of Listening

ATTENTIVE
(listening to gain information)

- select pertinent facts
- follow directions
- grasp main idea
- develop a sense of story

ANALYTICAL
(listening with comprehension)

- identify sounds
- detect shades of meaning
- detect propaganda
- comprehend meaning
- identify sources of information

APPRECIATIVE
(listening for enjoyment and to heighten sensitivity)

- build sensitivity to language
- enjoy sounds of language
- enjoy sounds of nature
- enjoy music, plays, poetry
- participate in word play

COURTEOUS
(listening with consideration for others)

- avoid interrupting
- be attentive-eye contact
- suspend judgment until speaker is finished

MARGINAL
(listening passively until called to attention)

- provide background music
- tune out distractions
- identify routine alarm devices
- recognize changes in tone of voice

CRITICAL
(listening in order to make a judgment)

- develop criteria
- categorize information
- separate fact from opinion
- make comparisons
- solve problem
- make judgment

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A Framework for Teaching: Listening

Concept: Listening skills can be taught and improved through planned instruction.

Goals: To improve student's ability to listen critically, courteously, attentively and appreciatively.
To improve children's ability to analyze and apply ideas as they listen.

Interrelationships

Mutual reinforcement with:

speaking — communicate intelligently
ask and answer questions
follow oral directions, assignments
comprehend oral reports and select pertinent ideas
grasp main idea in discussion

writing — develop sense of story from hearing many stories
use listening experiences as spring boards for writing

reading — increase vocabulary and comprehension
refine word recognition skills
gain an appreciation of literature

Essential Experiences:

- [illegible]
- [illegible] all
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]

- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]

- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]
- [illegible]

For Example:

Students:

- Play listening games such as Simon Says and Gossip
- Build group stories
- Supply missing words in familiar rhyme
- Categorize sounds heard indoors and outdoors
- Visit a listening corner with records, tapes, earphones, sound filmstrips
- Have time for small group sharing conversation
- Listen to reports by peers and list details and ask relevant questions
- Listen to a story and express feeling it creates, predict ending or give main idea
- Listen to a paragraph and suggest reasonable title or identify a sentence that doesn't belong
- Listen to music and select favorite passages
- Follow directions for a new game
- Listen to stories and poetry for enjoyment of the language and ideas presented

Evaluation

Does student:

- Follow oral directions capably?
- Need repetition before responding to spelling words or answering questions?
- Respond emotionally to stories with laughter, tears or comments?
- Respond appropriately to questions?
- Use broadened vocabulary gained from listening?
- Identify specific sounds by matching sound with object, recognizing letters, and providing rhyming words?
- Attend for reasonable length of time?
- Summarize a report, activity or story in an organized manner?

Resources

Hayden, Stanley, Rosser, JoAnn, Madsen, Susan, and Taylor, Barry. *Change for Children*. Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear, 1973.

Lundsteen, Sara W. *Listening: Its Impact At All Levels on Reading and Other Language Arts*. Revised Edition. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1979.

_____. "Procedures for Teaching Critical Reading and Listening." In *Language and the Language Arts*, ed. Johanna S. DeStefano and Sharon E. Fox. Boston: Little, Brown, 1974.

Russell, David and Elizabeth Russell. *Listening Aids Through the Grades*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959.

Taylor, Stanford E. *Listening: What Research Says to the Teacher*. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1964.

Tooley, D.J.A. "A Cognitive Approach to Teaching Listening." *Language Arts*, Vol. 54 (March 1977), pp. 262-265.

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from the local district. We are not being fair to children if we do not help them to understand the need to communicate in an ever growing circle of life situations. Only when children recognize this need will they be motivated to make changes in their speech habits. "Studying" standard English or usage conventions will not guarantee such change in behavior.

Opportunities to express themselves in a variety of situations requiring oral response are essential. **At certain times children need to feel free to speak without fear of correction or interruption. They need, too, to recognize the needs of others to have an equal opportunity to be heard.**

Children with speech problems resulting from physical or mental disabilities usually require professional help but the teacher's attitude can do much to help these children in the classroom. **A teacher's understanding and acceptance of the way a child talks will support the child's self esteem during a period of therapy outside the classroom.** This acceptance will encourage the child's classmates to respond more sympathetically to the problem as well.

The teacher is often a "significant other" to children just as are parents and other adults who are trusted by children. Perhaps the statements offered in a recent motivation publication should be repeated here:

Significant others can:

- give students individual attention
- show kindness to students
- really listen to what students have to say
- value all students' contributions to class discussion
- give students continuing and constructive feedback
- treat students as unique individuals with courtesy and respect
- let students know that you have confidence in their ability

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Strategies for Classroom Discussion

Of the many oral expression experiences that take place in the elementary classroom, whole class or small group discussion may occur most frequently. Children need direction by the classroom teacher to function effectively during a discussion. There are multiple skills involved, although the most apparent are speaking and listening. Some of these skills are:

1. PREPARATION SKILLS for topic to be discussed
   - Understanding purpose for discussion
   - Selecting relevant materials
   - Summarizing information
   - Organizing information for quick retrieval
2. LISTENING SKILLS
   - Suspending judgment until speaker is finished
   - Understanding those using propaganda techniques
   - Keeping eye contact with speakers
   - Listening for main ideas
3. SPEAKING SKILLS
   - Enunciating clearly so that all can understand
   - Selecting words within range of group's ability
   - Speaking loudly enough to be heard
   - Improving and increasing vocabulary
   - Speaking to total discussion group (class - not just the teacher)
4. THINKING SKILLS
   - Responding with relevant remarks
   - Questioning those ideas not understood
   - Clarifying remarks or ideas presented
   - Weighing all contributions before making decision
5. SOCIAL SKILLS play an important part in the success of any group activity.
   - Taking turns - avoiding interruptions
   - Balancing contributions and listening - avoid "taking over"
   - Respecting contributions of others - avoid sarcastic remarks
   - Willing to listen to another point of view - reach a consensus

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continued from page 29

Obviously, the role of the teacher is an extremely sensitive one in classroom discussions. Perhaps the following tips will smooth the way to a successful group meeting.

1. Set clear purpose for discussion.
2. Select topics of concern and interest to students.
3. Provide ample time for preparation and pondering of the topic.
4. Assemble reference materials - books, films, tapes - to aid preparation or for use in discussion.
5. Attempt to reduce distractions when selecting time and location of meeting.
6. Set standards for discussion WITH children BEFORE beginning meeting.
7. Assume leadership role as needed but maintain participant status to keep discussion flowing around group.
8. Help children grow in use of their skills of questioning, solving problems, offering relevant responses and sharing conversation.
9. Provide time for summation of topic and evaluation of solutions offered.
10. Assist children who do not contribute by planning topics they can speak about or providing materials for them to use while talking.

Discussion takes time, but considering the many skills that may be improved, it seems well worth the time spent. The skills of discussion are essential for effective communication throughout life.

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Kinds of Oral Expression Experiences

SPEAKING

- Organize thoughts
- Express effectively
- Sensitive to audiences
- Appropriate usage

PERSUADING

- Debate formally
- Use propaganda techniques

INTERVIEWING

- Prepare well-known topic and person
- Formulate questions ahead
- Use time wisely

TELEPHONING

- Be courteous
- Be brief
- Answer promptly
- Know emergency procedures
- Take messages

CONDUCTING MEETINGS

- Know procedures
- Be fair/firm
- Keep order

CONVERSING

- Listen carefully
- Share ideas

BRAINSTORMING

- Ideas for projects
- Planning aid

DISCUSSING

- Listen attentively
- Keep on topic
- Take turns

QUESTIONING

- Come to point quickly
- Answer concisely
- Gain precisely

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A Framework for Teaching: Oral Expression

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Concept: A good oral language foundation is basic to a child's ability to read and write.

Goals: To improve children's power of expression.
To increase and enrich children's vocabulary.
To increase children's ability to speak clearly, appropriately and intelligently.

Interrelationships:
Mutual reinforcement with:

listening — answer questions appropriately
broaden speaking vocabulary
gain information to use in responses

writing — discuss experiences to better organize ideas
clarify word meanings for precise writing
enrich writing vocabulary with oral word play
record notes from oral reports

reading — read words from oral vocabulary more easily
reduce reading problems while improving speech

Essential Experiences:
Teachers:

- Create a nonthreatening atmosphere that encourages oral expression.
- Encourage children to formulate own questions.
- Provide varied opportunities for oral interaction.
- Limit teacher "talk" — encourage student involvement in discussion.
- Select discussion topics of interest and concern to students.
- Aid children in organizing oral presentations.
- Discuss standards for speakers and audience.
- Serve as a speech model for class.
- Provide rich and varied experiences that stimulate talk.
- Help children develop a growing sensitivity to the beauty and power of language.
- Investigate the many nonverbal cues to meaning.
- Aid students in developing good speech habits.
- Set acceptable and realistic standards for oral communication.

For example:
Students:

- Give directions of all kinds — games, directions to various locations.
- Dictate stories or reports of experiences.
- Convince classmates to vote, purchase, read or follow suggestions.
- Practice voice control, manner, posture when speaking.
- Use telephones in classroom.
- Brainstorm many ideas.
- Contribute to a panel discussion.
- Organize facts, know audience, think on feet during debates.
- Conduct meetings using parliamentary procedures.
- Interview principal, coach, teachers about topics of concern.
- Conduct surveys.
- Share experiences or materials.
- Play with words — meaning, rhyming, humor.

Evaluation:
Does student:

- Relate events in sequential order?
- Stay on topic, take turns in discussions?
- Use words appropriately and easily?
- Use complete sentences when appropriate?
- Read orally with ease and pronounce correctly?
- Contribute to discussions, conversation?
- Organize thoughts and express self well?
- Elicit positive audience reaction to oral presentations?
- Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard?
- Speak in an interesting manner?

Resources:

Cramer, Ruth Kearney. *Speaking Aids Through the Grades*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1975.

Lutley, James L. and Roger Shuy, eds. *Language Differences: Do They Interfere?* Newark, Delaware: IRA, 1973.

Mallett, Margaret and Bernard Newsome. *Talking, Writing and Learning 8-13*. London: Evans/Methuen Educational, 1977. (Schools Council Working Paper 59)

Powers, Wilma. *They All Need To Talk*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969.

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Drama means many things to many people. In the elementary classroom drama frequently takes the form of dramatic play or creative dramatics, although choral speaking, puppetry and pantomime are also included. Dramatic play is usually defined as unrehearsed play with materials found in the K-3 classroom. Children are often seen playing house, school or doctor and manipulating blocks into a variety of structures for playing train, building a skyscraper or trucks. The teacher provides these materials and rules for their use but otherwise allows children much freedom. Observation of children shows much talk occurring which aids language development and adult behavior being copied in an exaggerated manner.

Creative dramatics is more structured than dramatic play, and the teacher's role is more apparent. Incidents of importance to children are role played with children changing roles to learn to view problems or situations from another's point of view. Children's stories may serve as the basis for a look at how certain characters might be portrayed. Some creative drama might be related to social studies or science in which children dramatize a moment in history or a scientific discovery. A clear way to assess a child's understanding of the lessons involved would be the teacher's observation of such drama.

Movement to music, following a rhythmic pattern or moving through one's own imagination in the wind all help children release energy while enjoying a creative experience. In drama, children can try out many roles without fear. This helps them deal with aspects of life that they may someday encounter. For some children "acting out" will help them to clarify a situation from a story, a textbook or a classroom discussion.

Children who have grown up with television have had access to a medium in which the main element is drama. They have been exposed to all types of dramatic presentations in which the roles played, the themes depicted and the information dispensed represent a wide range of quality. The teacher may help children view these programs by examining the techniques of characterization and staging that make the difference in the quality of a production.

All activities should be educationally defensible and the teacher must have a clear understanding of the values involved in the experiences for children. Dramatics can be a healthy channel for emotions, an excellent group discussion topic, a stimulation of the senses and a springboard to other forms of creative expression. **Children who are seeing, feeling, and thinking in creative drama are more likely to find it easy to communicate in speaking and writing throughout the school day and beyond.**

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Kinds of Dramatic Presentations

DRAMATIC PLAY

Playing "house" using dolls
Using blocks as props
Playing at sand table
Playing in "school store" "bank" "post office"

ROLE-PLAYING

Trying on adult roles
Portraying story book characters
Making a scientific discovery
Becoming a pioneer, explorer or famous chef

MOVEMENT

Changing a familiar game around
Working as if 0-2 year old, a toddler
Moving to mood music
Matching to varying rhythms

CHORAL SPEAKING

Selecting a familiar poem or verse
Deciding on the range of voices needed
Reading the lines in a variety of ways
Evaluating effectiveness of each attempt

CREATIVE DRAMATICS

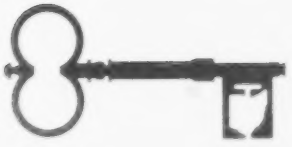
Using simple props (hats, scarves)
Improvising a situation with speech and movement
Sustaining a dialogue on a theme
Acting out a new ending to a story

PANTOMIME

Acting out parts while narrator reads script
Playing charades
Responding to story poem
Pantomiming a familiar activity

PUPPETRY

Using paper bag puppets
Using finger puppets
Creating stick puppets
Switching roles and puppets
Manipulating stick puppets on overhead projector while telling story
Recording story for use with puppets



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A Framework for Teaching: Dramatization

Concept: Children's natural enthusiasm for "acting out" can be directed into educationally sound activities.

Goals: To satisfy children's need for trying out adult roles.

To provide children experience with situations that depict varying points of view through role playing.

To provide an outlet for children's creative talents.

Interrelationships:

Motivation/enjoyment with:

- creative writing
- choral reading
- creative rhythmics
- increase sensitivity to rhythm and sound of language
- move in rhythm with sounds or music
- "direct" varied moves by changing voice and gesture
- increase ability to speak on the impromptu basis
- increase choral reading of poetry

reading — use stories to understand and portray characters

- develop and portray scenes from stories
- read aloud from play scripts

Essential Experiences:

Teachers:

- Understand and appreciate values of dramatic play.
- Provide time and an area free of furniture to create a theatre.
- Provide some equipment with which to create various roles.
- Observe drama and its values. Participate with children.
- Create drama when an appropriate environment to extend them.
- Encourage peer evaluation of performances.
- Guide imaginative experiences.
- Stimulate sensory impressions.
- Use literature as a stimulus for dramatic experiences.
- Explore various media as appropriate stimuli for drama.
- Recognize characterization as basis for creative dramatics.
- Recognize that a basic part of drama is self-evaluation.
- Ask questions that tap the ideas and imagination of children themselves.
- Enable children to transform their feelings and moods into movement.

For Example:

Students:

- Identify personal concerns that can be addressed through drama.
- Use color, music and comments to guide movement activities.
- Portray different kinds of people by adding hats and scarves.
- Role play pioneers struggling across the western plains.
- Participate in experiences with seeing, feeling, smelling and hearing as the basis of a response.
- Offer positive comments and suggestions after a creative performance.
- Read story or play while others pantomime the parts.
- Describe a setting and move through it taking different roles.
- Listen to an adventure story or folk tale and act out in an impromptu way.
- Select favorite story and create puppets or flannel-board characters for retelling.
- Listen to tape or cassette of story and respond with movement or pantomime.
- Respond with movement to musical themes that evoke different moods.
- Select familiar verse and plan the choral reading assignments.
- Discuss a common conflict and role play various solutions.
- Select partners and have one apply makeup or shave in front of "mirror partner."

Evaluation:

Do students:

- Improve in their ability to assess a performance positively?
- Work better as a team in producing drama?
- Show improvement in ability to speak or think "on their feet"?
- Exhibit more sensitivity to moods and feelings as a result of role playing?
- Accurately depict historical events in their drama?
- Show improvement in their ability to express themselves verbally and through actions?

Resources:

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The emphasis in teaching writing has been changing from *what* children write to *how* they write. Recent studies have focused on the process rather than the product, and their results appear to offer classroom teachers more effective strategies for the teaching of writing.

James Britton, Marie Clay, and Donald Graves, among others, have been providing the leadership in this study of the writing process. They each advocate the concept that children learn to write by writing, and that the interactions of the children and teacher are essential to the refining of the product. Product and the factors involved in good writing are not forgotten, but are introduced at a different stage of production. Most are introduced at the "editing" stage of a first or second draft. Children are urged to make revisions that clarify their ideas or message before their work is analyzed for specific mechanical problems. Children's anxiety about corrections reduces their ability to express ideas. If burdened by **how** they are writing, they will lose their enthusiasm and desire **to** write.

Writing takes time, and the classroom teacher can provide that time by integrating writing with all curriculum areas. Not only will children have more experiences with varying functions of writing, but they will come to view writing as an integral part of their daily lives and one of many excellent means of recording and expressing their ideas and thoughts.

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Stages in the Process of Writing

PREWRITING: Something to Write About

- Time to explore topics, ideas and perceptions
- Listen, read good literature, prose and poetry
- Try role playing or dramatizing an event
- Brainstorm with peers, teachers
- Research an idea in the library, locate facts, details
- Hold sustained discussions with peers, teachers
- Go on field trips and walks
- Ponder what has been seen, heard, experienced

FIRST DRAFT: A Purpose for Writing

- Decide on the reason for writing — to express self, record an event, entertain, persuade
- Think of the reader (audience) to whom writing is directed
- Write ideas, thoughts down quickly
- Organize ideas and write in logical sequence
- Explore new ideas generated by writing
- Pattern style after familiar story
- Create new endings or setting for a story

REVISION: Clarify the Message

- Reread aloud to "hear" your message
- Listen for dull, repetitive statements
- Share with peer or teacher to check interpretation by others
- Focus on effective use of words
- Look at organization and clarity of message

EDITING: Improving the Mechanics

- Check grammar
- Use dictionary to correct spelling
- Look over punctuation and capitalization
- Check flow of words and vitality of message

PUBLISHING: Making Use of the Final Product

- Design and make own books
- Copy story or poem into student-made books
- Shelve in classroom or school library for use by others
- Compile reports, articles into class notebooks
- Keep folder of all writing to check progress or for later publishing
- Write stories, make books for younger children to read
- Share stories orally in class and with younger listeners
- Keep a journal when have something to record — might include a student-student dialogue
- Contribute to a young author's corner or bulletin board
- Submit books "published" to a young author's conference

Handwriting

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The mechanics are as important to the craft of writing as they have always been; it is the placement of their use that has undergone great change at the elementary level. Many children have been discouraged from writing because of the emphasis on mechanics occurring long before they have seen a need for acquiring the skills of spelling, handwriting and usage.

The present trend of thought for instruction in handwriting is to teach the formation of letters, either manuscript or cursive, in the primary grades so that children have a tool with which to transcribe their ideas. The refinement of their handwriting, of course, continues, but writing is viewed in its best form when that writing is going to be used in some specific written product such as a letter, a report, a class book, or a story to be published in a school or classroom paper. Children can then more easily understand the need for legibility and neatness. The following criteria for a handwriting program might include:

- Well-planned direct teaching to develop proficiency
- An individualized approach following initial instruction so that each individual needs are met
- Periodic teacher discussion of reasons for good handwriting
- Legibility as the first criterion, speed to follow
- The teaching method for the formation of letters as follows
- Proper position and [illegible]
- Correlation of [illegible]
- Instruction in [illegible]
- Writing in [illegible]
- Writing experiences [illegible]

Beginning experiences

- Chalkboard [illegible]
- Chalked [illegible] on an easel and the chalkboard should be used before lined paper at a desk
- Left to right drawing of [illegible] should be practiced
- In using manuscript writing, the child needs to be able to make circles and straight lines
- Verbalizing handwriting experiences may improve a beginning writer's attempts

Later experiences

- Quality of handwriting can be judged by children with teacher guidance on improving form, size, spacing, alignment, slant and neatness
- Speed is not a major element during the elementary years though children should acquire greater speed naturally as they master the techniques
- A folder of children's writing efforts should be maintained for diagnoses of difficulties and evaluation of improvement by teacher, child and parent
- If a transition to cursive writing is made, children should be given an option to write in their most comfortable form when completing tests or writing reports
- Group evaluation of legible writing can be done with the use of an opaque projector. (What makes this paper easy to read? What causes you difficulty when reading this next paper?)
- Continue use of both manuscript and cursive to maintain skills
- Handwriting difficulties can be checked during the editing process in most writing projects whether one is alone or working

Resources

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We now recognize that we must build on what children know and change some of their assumptions about the complexities of their language system.

Therefore, the teaching of spelling should be linked with word recognition skills and word exploration in the classroom.

Analyzing spelling errors

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Common types of errors

ERROR	POSSIBLE CAUSE	EXAMPLES
Spelling wrong word	confusing words similar in sound	loose for lose
Substituting letters	confusing vowel sounds	din for den
	confusing consonant sounds	sents for cents
Adding letters	doubling consonant incorrectly	comming for coming
	incorrect suffix	partys for parties
Transposing letters	misunderstanding generalization	recieve for receive
	carelessness	saftey for safety
Omitting letters	forgetting silent vowel	wer for were
	using phonetic spelling	Wensday for Wednesday
Other errors	inaccurate pronunciation	liberry for library
	poor handwriting	ruin for rain

Beginning experiences

- Children need help with printing and naming letters of the alphabet.
- Children need to practice printing words correctly.
- Children should be able to write their own names and a few other words from memory.
- A desire and interest in learning to spell should be encouraged.
- Formal spelling lessons should begin after children indicate a readiness for the task.
- Word recognition skills, phonetic and structural, are aids to spelling.
- Invented spelling as children begin to write should be accepted as a step towards later mastery.
- Emphasis on word meaning is important to develop readiness.
- Emphasis on oral cues when reading aloud to children can lead to greater understanding.

Later experiences

- Errors in spelling should be analyzed and specific reteaching.
- Children need help in developing a systematic approach to new words.
- Spelling "demons" should be identified and presented to students (words with schwa sound, r-controlled vowels, certain letter sounds).
- Practice in dictionary use aids student independence in spelling proofreading.
- Supplementary spelling words should be selected for their utility.
- Individual differences must be recognized and met.
- Test-study-test methods are favored in upper grades.
- Self-corrected tests aid student understanding of errors.

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Grammar, Usage, Punctuation and Capitalization

Grammar

Grammar is the study of the structure of language and deals with the form and structure of words, with their arrangement in phrases and sentences and their functions. In recent years the traditional grammar based on the rules of Latin has been supplemented or replaced by other grammars. The linguists study of the way we speak (structural grammar) which records language as it exists, identifies basic sentence patterns and describes the function of words. This was followed by transformational grammar which was developed to overcome the weaknesses of the structural approach. The kernel sentence is the core of the system. The diagram is Anything added to change the kernel sentence (The Little Engine Diagram shows the effect of changes in the kernel sentence.

Grammar deals with word classifications, whether traditional or structural, and the terminology should be used when it is helpful to do so. The terms may differ somewhat such as an adjective used a determiner and an adjective, an interjection used as a noun or as a verb, or a verb expression. Children should have the freedom with them.

It is also difficult for children to learn the names of word functions and their parts as they are to improve their writing expression. **Teachers should deal with this structure and function of language informally, but not incidentally.** The activities dealing with the forms, structure and functions of language are most successful in situations from which the need for using specific language skills arises.

Research in a study published by Roberts[1] showed formal grammar has little or no effect on the improvement of composition skills and practices in language usage and composition. **Elementary students benefit most from practicing their writing and speaking, learning by listening to language in use, and reading the publications of others as well as their own. Definitions and "rules" are not effective tools unless they are preceded by experiences that exemplify those rules.**

Usage

Language is constantly changing and there are many levels of its use from illiterate to literate and in many forms. Words are invented as a result of advances in technology and familiar words take on new meanings. Levels of language change to accommodate audiences and situations. The national standard of language at the elementary school has moved from formal to an informal standard and some linguists recommend that we teach a variety of levels of usage (standard, dialect, slang, colloquial).

Usage is concerned with the choices we make when using words and is often thought of in terms of "correctness" or "incorrectness". The National Council of Teachers of English has urged teachers to observe that acceptable usage is determined by the

[1] Roberts, Robert E. *The Teaching of English Usage*. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1964.

[illegible] current language in use, the figurative dialect and geographical variations, judges appropriateness by the purpose intended, recognizes situational levels of speech, and takes the historical development of language into account.

Teachers must be sensitive to the responses of children with use other than the dominant language of a school or community. If these children are being ridiculed by their peers, then dialect differences become an area of concern. The teacher needs to understand the dialect or colloquialism so that the child's learning can be expanded. Students need to be reminded of their own knowledge of language and encouraged to select the words or that express what they want to say. Children should want to improve their language otherwise they will feel free to use language. Typically, usage difficulties are centered around a few common errors and teachers should use their best judgment in determining which need to be improved. Instruments to help may be the communications.

Some usage difficulties are only problems in written form. For example, do I am going _____ the store." Children must identify which of the words, this, too, have the correct one to use. When children say, "I am going to the store," there is no problem. The same would be true of there and there and the many other homophones in our language.

Punctuation

The unique aspect of punctuation is that it appears only in print and not in speech. We "punctuate" in speech to some extent by stress, pause, inflection and tone of voice, but punctuation is in reality a visual aid to make sense of writing. Writing has been practiced for almost 5,000 years, but punctuation marks have been used for a little over 200 years. We are still attempting to find a more adequate system.

Children should be introduced to punctuation marks [illegible] and always in the context of [illegible]. While there are many punctuation [illegible] a large number of them are [illegible] elementary school. In [illegible] the basic marks [illegible] quotation marks, and [illegible]

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An overemphasis on punctuation to the detriment of the ideas expressed, however, may hinder the desire to write.

Capitalization

Beginning experiences—

- Use colored chalk on chalkboard to identify punctuation marks and capital letters.
- Have children sign name forms to practice capital letters.
- Dramatize punctuating sentences with Mr. Period, Mr. Question Mark, Miss Comma.

Later experiences—

- Serve as an "editor" for children's writing after ideas are on paper.
- Keep a folder of children's writing and use to provide evidence of needed improvements.
- Develop a song on punctuation marks or a game with homonyms.
- Use daily newspaper to identify various kinds of sentences, punctuation, capitalization.
- Start a class newspaper for overall writing experiences—especially editing and proofreading practice.
- Emphasize **use** of language by setting writers, reasons and styles.
- Use an overhead or opaque projector to identify writing pieces with class (no names on papers).
- Continue strong "dialogue" with children who know how to.
- Use various books, posters and charts to focus on interest of the moment.
- Use best papers to publish (with parental permission) and display.
- Write on only a few lines (skipping lines).
- Limit use (when) of red pencil; write comments and questions instead.

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Forms of Written Communication

PRACTICAL WRITING

- business letters
- labels captions
- thank you notes
- friendly letters
- invitations

RECORDING

- notes from speakers, readings
- experimental data
- events in sequence
- lists of materials, names
- experience charts

EXPOSITORY

- reporting facts, data
- information
- directions

PERSUASIVE

- editorials
- directions
- advertisements

EXPRESSIVE (factual or imaginative)

- prose stories
- poetry-verse
- (patterns, free verse)
- recording experiences
- thoughts, feelings
- journal writing

REPORTING

- news
- results of experiments
- social sports events
- (who-what-when-where-why)
- reports and television

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A Framework for Teaching Written Expression

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Concept

Goals

Interrelationships

Essential Experiences

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For Example

Students

- Try Sustained Silent Writing on a regular basis.
- Can dictate their individual stories or poems to an adult.
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Evaluation

Do students

- Disregard all form when writing creatively?
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Resources

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The values of including fine literature as an essential part of the entire school curriculum are well known. Good books can do much to supplement instruction and complement the topics under discussion. Books for children supply information about a subject in addition to indirectly teaching children about the process of both reading and writing.

There is a growing belief that children learn to read by reading and that they are stimulated to read by adults who can open the world of books to them in new and exciting ways. Children will develop lifelong reading habits if they are read to and have access to a library of many books, are encouraged to read and to share their favorite stories with others, are provided with many opportunities to respond to stories and poetry in a variety of ways and are encouraged to extend literature with experiences in art, music, drama, and writing.

Children are enriched by the literature they hear and read and almost unconsciously store away positive feelings about books and reading. The development of imaginative thinking may be aided by acquaintance with animal fantasy, folklore or the fairy fantasy, stories of mature readers. The pattern of story so necessary for children to write their own tales of fact or fiction may be established. A knowledge of character development and of the form and style of various authors is extremely helpful when children

Hearing stories and poetry read aloud [illegible] help with an increasing attending vocabulary, and

strengthens their comprehension skills in addition to improving their ability to attend to the spoken word.

The vicarious experiences that children may encounter in literature supply them with insights and understandings about people and their world that could not possibly be experienced first hand. Books can be found that will enhance all topics and the broad range of human emotions. Interests may be kindled through books that lead to avocations and vocations.

Learning **from** literature can lead to learning **about** literature. In addition to developing a sense of story and character delineation and development, children may begin to gain a style of their own in the use of [illegible] and other literary devices such as [illegible] foreshadowing, flashback, and use of imagery. These should not be forced but should be introduced in the questioning of teachers to help children discover their meaning and their contribution in the context of a story or poem. As children become acquainted with a greater variety of stories and poetry, the discussion of form might be introduced to enrich meaning.

Above all, the pleasures that children find in books — the laughter, the wonder, the facts and the fantasies — all seem to encourage those children to learn to read and to love to read. When learning to read becomes a goal desired by children, they will apply themselves vigorously to mastering those skills that will help them achieve that end.

Literature as a Base for Critical Reading

Children's stories and books [illegible] provide a base for teaching [illegible] Children's interests and enthusiasm are piqued by the book [illegible] who reads aloud and the class discussion [illegible] These discussions can be arranged so that [illegible] devices of literature. They can [illegible] make judgments about the [illegible] become discriminating readers.

Forms of literature

Experiences with many types of literature [illegible] children to an awareness of the [illegible] them. Reading from both fiction and nonfiction [illegible] and poetry will broaden [illegible] the author's purpose for writing, to make them laugh, cry, or think.

Teachers can introduce children to the many forms of literature through reading aloud. After hearing several stories of historical fiction, for example, children can discuss what makes a historical novel good. As they develop its criteria, such as authenticity and accuracy and a feeling for the times, these will be considered as [illegible] historical stories are read. Literature each of the types of literature can be developed in this way. The next step can be making judgments based on their criteria and comparisons made with other examples of the same type. Thus, realistic fiction, both contemporary and historical; fantasy; traditional literature such as fables and folk tales; and biography and [illegible] become a familiar part of the children's [illegible] about books. A listing of [illegible]

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Forms of Literature

Prose		Poetry
Fiction	Nonfiction	Narrative
realistic	biography	Lyrical
contemporary	information books	Free verse
historical	picture books (ABC, counting, concept, informational)	Ballads
modern fantasy		Concrete poetry
traditional		Patterned poetry
fables		haiku
folk tales		tanka
legends		cinquain
myths		diamante
picture books		limerick
(can be all types, including wordless)		

Elements of fiction

As children become aware of the many forms of literature, they will begin to examine the different elements (see above) with each. Briefly, the major elements are theme, plot, setting, characterization, and style. The list below will identify and briefly

ELEMENT	DEFINITION	CRITERIA
theme	the central idea (subject) of a story	appropriate
plot	the action of the story	well-constructed
setting	the time and place of the story	authentic, credible
characterization	way author reveals the characters	believable
style	author's choice and arrangement of words and other literary devices	reflects tone

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materials as well. Just as with fiction, criteria for nonfiction can be determined. The best of biography and information books can then be selected for use in reports and research topics as well as for pleasure. Children should be introduced to many forms and patterns, so that they will recognize the variety available and be able to select their favorites.

Literary devices

After children have responded in a personal way to the stories and poetry they have heard or read, they may have questions that relate to the devices used by authors to make their stories memorable. Among the devices that might be used in children's literature are point of view, symbolism, figurative language and, at times, flashback. Children do not need to define these terms, but a knowledge of "who is telling the story" may help them discover meaning. Symbols representative of the theme occur in many stories and often provide the means to talk about theme or "big idea." Figurative language often causes children to think about common objects and events in unique ways. The language of the simile or metaphor should relate to children's experiences or they will fail to understand the meaning intended by the writer.

As teachers explore the literature and help children become more discriminating readers with the ability to make judgments about their reading, perhaps they can also see the relationship to the total language program. Discussions, observations, writing and listening are essential parts of the process of critically examining material. **Children's literature can be the catalyst that effectively integrates the communication skills.**

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Experiencing Literature

DEVELOPING APPRECIATION

- hearing or reading a variety of literature
- reading books by same author
- recognizing styles of illustrators
- developing enjoyment in books

RESPONDING TO LITERATURE

- dramatizing stories or poetry
- drawing, painting, sculpting scenes and characters from books
- portraying a character

WRITING FROM READING

- writing new endings
- creating a new story or poem
- following a story pattern
- creating a different book report

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

- experiencing many forms of literature
- reading stories on similar themes
- identifying similar story parts
- comparing different versions of folk tales

READING ALOUD

- reading to peers, younger children or family
- reading daily by teacher
- choral reading of poetry
- choosing books that stretch the imagination

STORY TELLING

- retelling favorite story
- story-telling by librarian, teachers or others
- encouraging children to join in refrains
- taping with-fold stories
- using flannelboard to enhance story

DISCUSSING SHARING BOOKS

- discussing believability of character
- discussing theme or concept
- relating story to own experiences
- questioning reality of story
- making oral book reports

IDENTIFYING LITERARY FORMS

- introducing new forms throughout year
- developing criteria for each literary form
- discussing the author's purpose
- learning to differentiate patterns of poetry

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A Framework for Teaching: Reading Children's Literature

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Concept: Good books serve as a motivating factor in the reading process

Goals: To develop in children a lifelong habit of reading
To develop children's imagination
To help children identify a variety of literary forms, styles and devices
To create in children an awareness of the information and enjoyment found in books

Interrelationships:

Mutual reinforcement with:

listening — develop concept of story, plot and characterization
acquire an awareness of rhyme and rhythm
identify theme or main idea

speaking — retell familiar stories
choral speaking (verse, choral and poetry)
share a story with small group

writing — create new endings to well-known story
follow story, poetry patterns
use new vocabulary appropriately

Essential Experiences:

Teachers:

- Read aloud from good books every day
- Guide discussions about books and their author/illustrator
- Use a variety of literature — prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction
- Develop criteria for identifying good information books
- Develop critical reading skills using literature
- Link children's personal and school experiences to books
- Share poetry daily
- Provide for extensions of literature with art, music and drama
- Encourage reading during free time
- Provide time for sharing of stories and poetry by children
- Maintain a classroom library
- Involve children in book selection for classroom library
- Work closely with school librarian or media specialist
- Use books to complement content area studies
- Develop criteria for judging good books
- Participate in National Book Week activities — Read Week activities

For Example:

Students:

- Retell stories with flannel board and puppets
- Study books by one author or illustrator
- Compare stories of similar theme, plot, setting
- Share a favorite story with a small group
- Read to younger children on regular basis
- Create time lines using facts from historical fiction
- Compare several biographies of a famous person
- Create games from adventure stories or fantasy
- Paint mural depicting many stories from one genre
- Read many variations of one folktale and discuss
- Use picture books to note detail, unity with text, color and artistic techniques
- Create dialogue or sound track to accompany wordless books
- Predict endings after reading part of story
- Use information book location skills in class project
- Dramatize stories — role play characters
- Hold book fairs in school or class — conduct a book character parade
- Write original story based on familiar plot or theme

Evaluation:

Do students:

- Attend to reading aloud and story telling?
- Respond to books in a variety of ways?
- Improve in ability to predict story action?
- Increase the number of books read independently?
- Continue to broaden their scope of reading?
- Apply literature learnings to other school work?

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